

Amendments to the Claims:

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions and listings of claims in the application:

Listing of Claims:

Claims 1 to 17 (Canceled)

18. (Previously Presented) A self-adhering surface covering comprising:

a substrate;

a pressure-sensitive adhesive layer disposed on the substrate and having an adhesive surface located opposite the substrate, the adhesive layer comprising an adhesive, the adhesive being substantially non-stringing; and

a barrier layer disposed substantially on and covering from about 1% to about 10% of the adhesive surface, wherein the barrier layer comprises a plurality of particles, the particles having a diameter substantially equal to or greater than the thickness of the adhesive layer, the particles being substantially non-adhesive, wherein the barrier layer exhibits a crush resistance of at least about 10 psi and is crushable when subjected to a load of about 20 psi or greater, and wherein the particles are selected from the group consisting of solid particles and porous particles.

19. (Previously Presented) The surface covering as claimed in claim 18, wherein the particles are substantially uniformly distributed over the surface of the adhesive layer.

20. (Original) The surface covering as claimed in claim 18, wherein at least some of the particles are distributed on the adhesive surface in a pattern.

Claim 21 (Cancelled)

22. (Previously Presented) The surface covering as claimed in claim 18, wherein the particles have a diameter substantially greater than the thickness of the adhesive layer.

23. (Previously Presented) The surface covering as claimed in claim 18, wherein the particles have a diameter substantially from about 2 to about 6 mils.

24. (Previously Presented) The surface covering as claimed in claim 18, wherein the particles are distributed onto the adhesive surface in an amount from about 0.05 to about 0.2 grams/ft² of adhesive surface.

25. (Previously Presented) The surface covering as claimed in claim 18, wherein the particles are distributed onto the adhesive surface in an amount from about 0.01 to about 0.1 cm³/ft² of adhesive surface.

Claim 26 (Canceled)

27. (Original) The surface covering as claimed in claim 18, wherein the particles cover about 2% of the adhesive surface of the adhesive layer.

28. (Original) The surface covering as claimed in claim 18, wherein the particles are collapsible or fragile under conditions employed for pressure-bonding the surface covering to a desired site of bonding.

Claim 29 (Cancelled)

30. (Previously Presented) The surface covering as claimed in claim 18, wherein the adhesive layer has a thickness from about 1 to about 2 mils.

31. (Currently Amended) The surface covering as claimed in claim 18, wherein the pressure-sensitive adhesive layer comprises an adhesive selected from natural rubber adhesives, synthetic rubber adhesives, acrylic adhesives, vinyl acetate adhesives, urethane adhesives, and mixtures thereof.

32. (Previously Presented) The surface covering as claimed in claim 18, wherein the pressure-sensitive adhesive layer comprises an e-beam curable adhesive formed from tridecyl acrylate and acrylic acid.

33. (Original) The surface covering as claimed in claim 18, wherein at least some of the particles are partially embedded in the adhesive layer.

34. (Original) The surface covering as claimed in claim 18, wherein the particles are capable of substantially resisting crushing upon being subjected to a load of about 60 lb/ft² which is dropped a vertical distance of about 1 foot.

Claims 35 to 54 (Canceled)

55. (Previously Presented) The surface covering of claim 18, wherein the non-adhesive particles are selected from the group consisting of calcium carbonate, barium

carbonate, calcium sulfate, barium sulfate, aluminum sulfate, molybdenum disulfide, titanium oxide, aluminum hydroxide, alumina, silica, magnesium oxide, calcium oxide, calcium hydroxide, ferrous oxide, ferric oxide, cured rubbers, ebonite, resins, and combinations thereof.

56. (Previously Presented) The surface covering of claim 18, wherein the substrate is substantially rigid.

57. (Previously Presented) The surface covering of claim 18, wherein the barrier layer further comprises a second plurality of particles, the particles of the second plurality being substantially non-adhesive hollow particles.

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Amdt. After Not. of All dated Oct. 2, 2003
Reply to Not. of All. of Sep 8, 2003

Amendments to the Drawing:

The attached sheet of drawings includes changes to Figure 2. This sheet, which includes Figures 1 to 3, replaces the original sheet of informal drawings including Figures 1 to 3, originally filed with the application. In Figure 2, mislabeled elements 41 and 44 have been corrected to 44 and 42, respectively.

Attachment: Replacement Sheet
Annotated Sheet Showing Changes